

Daimler Chrysler AG

5

Patent Claims

1. A control system (1) for a motor vehicle, having
  - a manual actuating means (3) with a plurality of  
10 degrees of freedom of adjustment for selecting  
and/or activating entries in a menu structure with  
a plurality of menu levels and
  - a screen display (2) having a plurality of display  
15 areas (210 to 250) for displaying the menu  
structure, the display areas (210 to 250) each  
comprising at least one field for displaying one  
of the entries (1.1 to 5.7),  
characterized in that
    - in at least one level of the menu structure, at  
20 least one display area (230) which is active in  
order to select an entry can be displayed on the  
screen display (2),
    - at least one subarea of the other display areas  
(210, 220, 240, 250) is displayed graphically in a  
25 different way than the at least one active display  
area (230).
2. The operating system as claimed in claim 1,  
characterized in that the different graphic display can  
30 be combined with a timing function which can be  
activated as a function of actuation of the manual  
actuating means (3).
3. The operating system as claimed in claim 2,  
35 characterized in that the timing function is  
implemented as a predefinable time period which is  
reset and restarted by actuating the manual actuating  
means (3), in which case the graphic display of the at

least one subarea can be changed after the predefinable time period has expired.

4. The operating system as claimed in one of claims 1 to 3, characterized in that the different graphic display can be activated as a function of one of the menu levels.

5. The operating system as claimed in one of claims 1 to 4, characterized in that the at least one subarea of the other display areas (210, 220, 240, 250) can be displayed with a different color and/or with a different intensity and/or with a different contrast than the active display area (230).

6. The operating system as claimed in claim 5, characterized in that the intensity and/or the contrast of the graphic display of the at least one subarea can be changed in a continuously or incrementally decreasing fashion as a function of a further predefinable time period.

7. The operating system as claimed in one of claims 1 to 4, characterized in that the at least one subarea is removed from the display completely.

8. The operating system as claimed in one of claims 1 to 7, characterized in that, in the active display area in at least one menu level,

- 30 - a first and/or a second of the plurality of degrees of freedom of adjustment of the manual actuating means (3) for selecting and/or activating one of the entries (1.1 to 5.7) corresponds to an orientation of the entries (1.1 to 5.7) displayed in the active display area, and
- 35 - a third and/or a fourth degree of freedom of adjustment of the manual actuating means (3) for exiting the active display area is respectively

orthogonal to the orientation of the displayed entries (1.1 to 5.7).

9. The operating system as claimed in claim 8,  
5 characterized in that when the at least one entry is arranged vertically in the active display area,
- the first degree of freedom of adjustment is pushing the manual actuating means (3) in a positive y direction,
  - 10 - the second degree of freedom of adjustment is pushing the manual actuating means (3) in a negative y direction,
  - the third degree of freedom of adjustment is pushing the manual actuating means (3) in a  
15 positive x direction, and
  - the fourth degree of freedom of adjustment is pushing the manual actuating means (3) in a negative x direction of an xyz coordinate system.
- 20 10. The operating system as claimed in claim 8, characterized in that, when the at least one entry is arranged horizontally in the active display area,
- the first degree of freedom of adjustment is pushing the manual actuating means (3) in a  
25 positive x direction,
  - the second degree of freedom of adjustment is pushing the manual actuating means (3) in a negative x direction,
  - the third degree of freedom of adjustment is  
30 pushing the manual actuating means (3) in a positive y direction, and
  - the fourth degree of freedom of adjustment is pushing the manual actuating means (3) in a negative y direction of an xyz coordinate system.